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Governor Announces New DEQ Secretary

Gov. Mike Foster announced today the appointment of Dr. Hall Bohlinger as secretary of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Bohlinger will replace outgoing DEQ Secretary John Dale Givens, who is retiring for health reasons after more than 36 years in state service.

"I'm sorry to see Dale go, he's made some important long-term contributions to the office. Three things that come quickly to mind are: 1) Reengineering the whole department to make it a more efficient and effective department; 2) converting the department's paper files into computerized documents for much easier accessibility and management; and 3) developing a dual career ladder system so that technical people could advance without moving into management." Foster said.

The governor also praised Bohlinger and said he expects a smooth transition.

"Hall knows DEQ inside and out. He shares my philosophy that a clean environment is good for business," Foster.

Bohlinger has been the deputy secretary of the Department of Environmental Quality since 1996. He has been involved in state environmental regulatory programs for DEQ and its predecessor agencies since 1971, including service as DEQ deputy secretary in 1987 and 1988. His tenure at DEQ also includes serving as assistant secretary, Office of Air Quality and Nuclear Energy, administrator of the Radiation Protection Division, and administrator of the Hazardous Waste Division.

Bohlinger received a BS in Biology from Southeastern Louisiana University in 1965; a Master of Science from Tulane University in 1970; and a Doctor of Science from Tulane in Environmental Science with a nuclear specialty in 1975.

Givens' retirement ends a long and distinguished career in state service. He began as a biologist in the Water Pollution Control Division of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. He became administrator of that division in 1979 and retained the position when the Water Pollution Control Division was transferred to the Department of Natural Resources in 1980. He has also served as the executive secretary of the Louisiana Stream Control Commission and as technical secretary for water with the Louisiana Environmental Control Commission.